time nursing positions and in the percentage of staff nurses employed in settings that require around-the-clock nurse staffing. However, these differences may be true changes in workforce behavior, rather than bias, since employment characteristic data in the licensure files can be anywhere from 1 month old to 23 months old at any given point in time. The result is that the bias analysis shows some slight differences between the survey respondents and the population characteristics of staff nurses in North Carolina, but none that are expected to have an undue influence on the findings presented here and in subsequent reports using the staff nurses survey data.

Personal Characteristics

 Tables 1 through 5 below report the personal demographic characteristics of the RN and LPN staff nurses who responded to the survey. The findings show that, as groups, RN and LPN staff nurses differ on many personal characteristics.

One of the biggest differences between RN and LPN staff nurses is in their racial composition. Approximately 26% of North Carolina's population is made up of people of color.[iv] Table 1 shows that a higher proportion of LPN staff nurses (about 24%) come from minority groups than is true of RN staff nurses (about 8.5% from minority groups).

Table 1.   Racial composition of the RN and LPN staff nurse workforce

	Staff RNs		Staff LPNs	
Race	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
White	296	91.4	210	76.4
Black	19	5.86	51	18.5
American Indian	0	0	4	1.4
Asian / Pacific Islander	4	1.2	2	0.7
Multiracial	0	0	1	0.4
Other	4	1.2	5	1.8
Data missing	1	0.3	2	0.7
Totals	324	99.96	275	99.9
χ^2 p-value	< 0.0001			

Note: Chi-square tests were run on condensed tables comparing white versus all other racial groups.

There is also a significant difference in the patterns of marital status for RN and LPN staff nurses. Although the majority of staff nurses report being married, about three-quarters of RN staff nurses were married at the time of the survey compared to about two-thirds of their LPN colleagues (see Table 2). In addition, there appears to be a relationship between race and marital